Boston Oct. 24. 1837.

Dear Brother Smith

Dea. Gulliver informed me this afternoon that they had received a letter from you advising them to go on with the proposed new organization. I have done all I could to prevent such an organization, at least until it should be made more palpably manifest that it is necessary — particularly have I wished that the contemplated movement should be deferred until after the annual meeting of the State Society in January. The connexion of the Liberator & the Society will then cease, nor do I believe that any attempt would then be made to continue or renew it. If such an attempt should be made, it would be vain, in my opinion. If it was, the paper would then stand on its own responsibility, the Society would be quit, Garrison would branch off in a perfection-no-government-no-clergy & woman's preaching flight, & that would end him. Or if the connexion should continue, that would settle the question, & afford good & palpable ground for separate & independent action. However Dea. G. & some of the friends here seem determined to move now, & therefore though I can not & do not yet go with them, I am anxious that they should so go as not to make a failure. I want the movement

It will be awfully ruinous to have it a failure. It will only confirm Garrison in what is bad, & seal the death warrant of any similar movement hereafter. You, & those in it must work & not trust too much in the hands of the Deacon. He is apt to fire before he takes aim. Hold him in.

P.S. I write you this in confidence, of course. I learn to day that they have fixed on Dec. 7. as the day for the organization of the Society. You will have to work industriously to do the thing handsomely in so short a time.

PHELPS MSS.

68

to proceed in such a way as not to lower principle one iota, nor gather into it a mass of mere dead orthodoxy, on the subject. I have seen the constitution, & suggested some little alterations. It is good – almost word for word the constitution of the American Society.

The danger now is a too precipitate movement. What will be decided on at the meeting this evening I do not know. The Dea. &c said this afternoon they thought of a committee to draft an address to the public on the subject, & to call a meeting, say on the 23d of November, for the formation of the Society. I advised against any public document that would get the matter into the papers *before* the meeting, & against a meeting so soon, & told them they should first send out circulars to private individuals, with the form of a call for the proposed convention in them, get as many names as possible, specially of laymen, & then, some six weeks or two months hence, throw the call out with the names appended – (names enough to command respect) – say two weeks before the time fixed on for the meeting.

Now what I desire of you is that you will use your influence to see that our friends who are in this thing make haste slowly, that they may thereby go surely.

And especially do I desire that you will see to it that the separation be like that of Abraham & Lot, & not one that will put the new Society in the attitude of opposition & hostility to the present. This is all important. Let the whole movement be that of men going quietly, coolly & decisively about their work, & not that of men who are apparently worried about something or somebody that they dont like. *Live* the present State organization into a good spirit & good manners, rather than attempt to bring them to it by finding fault with it or Garrison.

If Circulars are sent you, do get as many laymen on the call as possible. The fewer clergymen the better.

I had hoped all along to prevent any such movement. I have & do still deem it all-important to save the present Society from falling entirely into hands that will make it purely anti-evangelical in its character & influence. Such is still my hope in regard to the society, though I have pretty much given up Garrison. He falls, if he falls, & fall I fear he has or will, a victim to Perfectionism. I pray God he may yet be saved from such a ruin. However if he must go, I have no idea of going with him. I can pardon much very much on the score of hard language, denunciation &c. to the spirit of liberty, but I cannot pardon such isms as those which Garrison is now linking with his abolition. I have remonstrated with him & told him plainly that if such is to be his course I must & shall come out against him. I wait the result. If there is no change, I shall labor the case in some shape with the board, & the result you will of course see. Such at least are my present determinations.

Please remember me to Mrs. S. & all our Brunswick friends, & believe me as ever

Yours for the slave

A. A. Phelps.

Prof. Smyth

Brunswick

Me.

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OCT 23

Rev. A. A. Phelps

Ms. A. 21. v.7 p.67